**THE IBADAN VARSITY CHRISTIAN UNION**

**The University of Ibadan, Ibadan. Oyo State.**

**Bible Study Outline**

**Wednesday, 11th September, 2024**

**FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST TENURE**

**TOPIC: IN HIS FOOTSTEPS; LIVING A LIFE OF LOVE**

**TEXTS: JOHN 13:34-35, I COR 13**

**MEMORY VERSE: John 13:34-35**

**“A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another, as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. (KJV)**

**INTRODUCTION**

In our last study, we considered the reality of what it means to be in Christ and as we continue to follow Christ in his footsteps, it is expedient that we take a close look at the life of Jesus in fulfilling the greatest commandment which is centred on “LOVE.” Join us as we journey in the light of the scriptures to discover what love truly is, what it means to live a life of love and the extent to which believers are called to love. May the Lord grant us understanding. Amen

**STUDY POINTS**

**WHAT IS LOVE?**

* Love comes from God and God himself is Love. (1John 4:7-8, 16) This love is most clearly demonstrated in Christ, who laid down His life for us. (John 15:13,1 John 3:16, John 3:16)
* Love is the evidence of the new birth. (1John 3:14,
* Love is a fruit of the Spirit. (Gal 5:22-23)
* Love is the law of the New Covenant. (John 13:34-35, Rom 13:10, Gal 5:14)

**MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT LOVE**

* A mere emotional feeling. Biblical love is a command, and it comes from God (Mark 12:30-31).
* Love is only for those who are good. The God-kind of love knows no bounds, and is extended to all kinds of people (Luke 10:25-37, Matthew 5:46-47).
* Love is blind. The biblical kind of love is not blind. We choose to overlook others’ wrongs, just as God covered our sins through Christ’s sacrifice (Philippians 1:9-11, Romans 4:7-8).

In 1 Cor. 13, we are shown what true biblical love is. Can you point out what characterizes true biblical love?

**THE LIFE OF LOVE AS LIVED OUT BY CHRIST**

Jesus, while He was here on earth lived out love, and gave us the perfect template for living out this life.

∙ His submission to God’s will. (John 5:30, Matthew 26:39)

∙ His relationship with sinners. (Luke 7:36-50, Luke 15:1-7, John 8:3-11)

∙ His compassion for men. (Mark 1:40-41, Mark 8:1-10, Luke 13:10-1)

∙ His mercy in spite of transgressions. (Luke 22:49-52, Luke 23:34)

∙ Praying for His disciples. (John 17:9-26)

∙ The laying down of His life for us. (John 9:14-18, John 15:13)

The life of love demonstrated by Christ was also exhibited by the believers of the early church in that**;**

∙ They prayed for one another. (Acts 4:23-26, Acts 12:5,12)

∙ They had all things in common. (Acts 4:32-34)

∙ They did not shy away from giving corrections. (Galatians 2:11-14)

**HOW TO LIVE THE LIFE OF LOVE AS BELIEVER**S

* Love for God by keeping His commandments and loving Him with all our being. (John 14:15, 14:21-24, Matt. 22:37)
* Love for the brethren in deed and in truth; Love is not mere words. It is to be shown and can be seen (Prov. 3:27, Rom. 12:9 (NLT), 1 Pet. 1:22). Our love for our brethren should be Christ loves us (John 13:34-35, John 15:12) incorporating the ‘laying down our lives’ for our brethren (1 John 3:16).
* Love for unbelievers (those seemingly posing as enemies): by doing them good, praying for them (Matt. 5:43-48, Luke 6:27-36, Rom. 12:17-21) preaching the love and righteousness of God. (2Cor 5: 20 - 21)

It is important to note that living the life of love the way it is required by our Lord is not for an unbeliever. Remember that we love Him because He first loved us (1 John 4:19).

**DISCUSSION:** What should be the motivation to love? Does love have a limit?

**WHAT LOVE ACCOMPLISHES**

* Love is a vital ingredient in Unity; (Romans 14:19, 1 Peter 3: 8-9, Phil 2:2, 2 Cor 13:11). Unity is not sameness or uniformity but living in peace with one another and honouring one another despite our differences.
* We evidence our new birth and relationship with Jesus as His disciples by living a life of love; (1John 3:14, John 13:35.)

**CONCLUSION**

Dearly beloved, love from the biblical perspective, transcends mere emotion. It is a command we have received from God—first towards Him, then towards others.

We see its perfect and pure expression in our Lord Jesus Christ who gave Himself for us to bring us to God (1 Pet. 3:18).

And even now, if we will as well live a life of love the way Jesus desires of us, then we must ever keep His love for us before our eyes, putting aside the blinding veil of our biases or ‘definitions from experience’ and esteeming with great honour the word of God by which we have been given the commandment to love.